

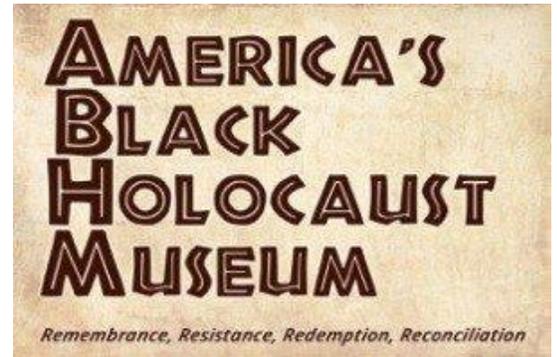


**WISCONSIN  
CONFERENCE**  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

## **America's Black Holocaust Museum**

*by Rev. Curt Anderson*

[America's Black Holocaust Museum](#) – ABHM – was founded by Dr. James Cameron on North Avenue in 1984 in Milwaukee. In 1930, at the age of 16, Dr. Cameron survived a lynching in Indiana. Somewhat later he moved to Milwaukee and started ABHM. For more than 20 years, the museum told the whole story of African-Americans in the United States – pre-captivity in Africa, how they were captured and brought to this country, the years of slavery, the Jim Crow era, civil rights, and the present. The museum is structured around four main themes through which it tells these stories: Remembrance, Resistance, Redemption, and Reconciliation.



In 2008, during the great recession, the museum was forced to close for financial reasons. But a group of people got together and kept the vision alive with an online museum which tells the same story: [www.abhmuseum.org](http://www.abhmuseum.org). Now, the museum is being rebuilt on the same spot it existed originally – 401 W. North Ave, the corner of North and Vel Phillips (4th) Ave. Throughout these years as a virtual, online museum, ABHM docents have led programs in schools, churches, libraries and other organizations in the Milwaukee area, continuing its work of telling the story of African-American history in the United States and specifically in Milwaukee. Reggie Jackson, the head griot (docent, storyteller) of ABHM was the featured speaker at the spring meeting of the Southeast Wisconsin Association UCC.

Now that the museum is working to raise money to become a physical institution once again, a group of UCC people and churches in the Milwaukee area are hoping to help with that task. This is being sponsored by the Racial Justice Task Force of the Wisconsin Conference UCC, the Mutton Lecture Committee of the Wisconsin Conference UCC, the Southeast Association Mission Team, and some churches and individuals. The suggestion and the hope is that Milwaukee-area UCC churches, Southeast Association UCC churches, and UCC churches across the Wisconsin Conference will raise money this fall or in 2019 to donate to the museum to help with their process of re-opening. One church has already committed to have an all-church offering. Another is donating money out of reserves. And a challenge grant of \$3000 has already been raised. That means any money raised in all UCC churches up to

\$3000 will be matched by this challenge grant. We urge you to give – personally, through a church offering, or in other ways – to this important Milwaukee institution. Plymouth Church UCC has graciously offered to be the financial agent for the giving to the museum. If you, or your church, or others would like to make a donation to the museum, please send it to Plymouth UCC, 2717 E. Hampshire Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53211. And make sure to send along a note saying that the money is for America's Black Holocaust Museum – ABHM.

Also, for those who are interested, and for those out of town who would enjoy a trip to Milwaukee, there will be an open house at the museum for UCC people on Sunday afternoon, Oct. 21, between 3 and 5pm. There will be presentations and tours at 3:30 and 4:15 talking about the museum and showing its progress toward eventual full re-opening, hopefully in the spring of 2019. It would be exciting to have the museum open prior to the Wisconsin Conference UCC's hosting of General Synod in June 2019!

If you have any questions, please contact one of these Racial Justice Task Force members: Curt Anderson – [curtjoana@aol.com](mailto:curtjoana@aol.com), Tim Perkins – [perkdrews@aol.com](mailto:perkdrews@aol.com), or Dale Stohre – [dalestohre@gmail.com](mailto:dalestohre@gmail.com).